

Voices of the Bay  
Michael Zucker Excerpts Oral History  
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Michael Zucker: Starting in the early eighties up until 1992, there were 250 ships with up to 30-mile-long gillnets that they put out every single night. These ships came from Taiwan, from South Korea, and from Japan. They effectively blocked off the entire albacore migration. In 1992, the United Nations signed a treaty that banned that kind of fishing in the North Pacific. Immediately the next year, [19]93, we started seeing different year classes of more fish show up. By [19]94, they had made a total incredible recovery out in the middle of Pacific. Albacores migrate every year. Some of them just go and hang out above Hawaii and around Hawaii. Some of them go a little further over towards Japan. They migrate every year towards the east throughout the months of May and June. Then they arrive off of our coast, usually in late June and July. Then they hang out, and they feed. They feed July, August, September, and into late October, sometimes early November, over on the West Coast of United States. Then they migrate back during the winter. It's amazing too, because they'll all leave in one day. One of the boats that was outside of us called and said, "Turn around. There's the biggest wave that's come in the last twenty-four hours. It's coming right now." But what happens is you don't want to get picked up by wave like a surfboard. That is the worst thing that can happen to you. Because what happens is if it picks you up and you start surfing, you lose all control of your boat. How many of you guys saw *The Perfect Storm*? Remember at the end when they eat it? That's exactly what happens. So, they get picked up by the wave. What gives you steerage when you're on a boat is the force from the propeller moving by your rudder. That water hits the rudder. And as you turn the rudder, it makes the boat go that way or that way. When the water comes from behind, you lose all control of that. That's what happens if you get picked up surfing. So, once that happens, if you go down that wave and just like what happened to them, you turn on their side, the boat goes to the side, turns over instant. That's the way that people die. You don't have a chance to get off the boat. It's a bad one. So, we avoid that at all costs. So, what we do is instead – there's something like that coming – we turn around, and we actually punch through it, which seems like that would be worse. But we go really, really slowly. Because if you go through with too much force, you'll blast out your windows.

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